

RETURN

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NUMBER OF VICTORIA CROSSES AWARDED TO MEMBERS OF THE
CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE TO DATE.

Thursday, April 11, 1918.

RETURN TO AN ORDER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, dated the 3rd April, 1918,
showing:—

- 1. How many Victoria Crosses have been awarded to members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force to date?
- 2. The name, address, battalion and rank of each recipient.
- 3. The official respective record in respect of which each decoration was given in each case.

M. BURRELL,
Secretary of State.

The number of Victoria Crosses which have been awarded to members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force to date is..	29
Of whom there were killed or died of wounds..	11
Still living..	18

Lt. Hugh Mackenzie, D.C.M., late Can. M.G. Corps (formerly P.P.C.L.I.).
For most conspicuous bravery and leading when in charge of a section of four machine guns accompanying the infantry in an attack.
Seeing that all the officers and most of the non-commissioned officers of an infantry company had become casualties, and that the men were hesitating before a nest of enemy machine guns, which were on commanding ground and causing them severe casualties, he handed over command of his guns to an N.C.O., rallied the infantry, organized an attack, and captured the strong point.
Finding that the position was swept by machine-gun fire from a “pill-box” which dominated all the ground over which the troops were advancing, Lt. Mackenzie made a reconnaissance and detailed flanking and frontal attacking parties which captured the “pill-box,” he himself being killed while leading the frontal attack.
By his valour and leadership this gallant officer ensured the capture of these strong points and so saved the lives of many men and enabled the objectives to be attained.

Captain William Avery Bishop, D.S.O., M.C., Canadian Cavalry and Royal Flying Corps (formerly 7th C.M.R.)
For most conspicuous bravery, determination and skill.
Captain Bishop, who had been sent out to work independently, flew, first of all, to an enemy aerodrome; finding no machine about, he flew on to another aerodrome, about three miles southeast, which was at least twelve miles the other side of the line. Seven machines, some with their engines running, were on the ground. He attacked these from about fifty feet, and a mechanic, who was starting one of the engines, was seen to fall. One of the machines got off the ground, but at a height of sixty feet Captain Bishop fired fifteen rounds into it at a very close range, and it crashed to the ground.

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A second machine got off the ground, into which he fired thirty rounds at 150 yards range, and it fell into a tree.

Two more machines then rose from the aerodrome. One of these he engaged at the height of 1,000 feet, emptying the rest of his drum of ammunition. This machine crashed 300 yards from the aerodrome, after which Captain Bishop emptied a whole drum into the fourth hostile machine and then flew back to his station.

Four hostile scouts were about 1,000 feet above him for about a mile of his return journey, but they would not attack.

His machine was very badly shot about by machine gun fire from the ground.

Captain Scrimger, Francis Alex. Caron, Canadian Army Medical Service, M.O. 14th Battalion, Royal Montreal Regiment.

On the afternoon of the 25th April, 1915, in the neighbourhood of Ypres, when in charge of an advanced dressing station in some farm buildings which were being heavily shelled by the enemy, he directed, under heavy fire, the removal of the wounded, and he himself carried a severely wounded officer out of a stable in search of a place of greater safety. When he was unable alone to carry this officer further he remained with him under fire till help could be obtained.

During the very heavy fighting between 22nd and 25th April, Captain Scrimger displayed continuously day and night the greatest devotion to his duty among the wounded at the front.

Colour-Sergeant Hall, Frederick William, 8th Battalion.

On 24th April, 1915, in the neighbourhood of Ypres, when a wounded man who was lying some 15 yards from the trench called for help, Company Sergeant-Major Hall endeavoured to reach him in the face of a very heavy enfilade fire, which was being poured in by the enemy. The first attempt failed, and a non-commissioned officer and private soldier who were attempting to give assistance were both wounded. Company Sergeant-Major Hall then made a second most gallant attempt, and was in the act of lifting up the wounded man to bring him in when he fell mortally wounded in the head.

24066 Lance-Corporal Fisher, Frederick, 13th Battalion.

On the 23rd April, 1915, in the neighbourhood of St. Julien, he went forward with the machine-gun, of which he was in charge, under heavy fire, and most gallantly assisted in covering the retreat of a battery, losing four men of his gun team.

Later, after obtaining four more men, he went forward again to the firing line and was himself killed while bringing his machine-gun into action under very heavy fire, in order to cover the advance of supports.

73132 Private (A/Cpt.) Clarke, Leo.

For most conspicuous bravery. He was detailed with his section of bombers to clear the continuation of a newly-captured trench and cover the construction of a "block." After most of his party had become casualties, he was building a "block" when about twenty of the enemy with two officers counter-attacked. He boldly advanced against them, emptied his revolver into them and afterwards two enemy rifles, which he picked up in the trench.

One of the officers then attacked him with the bayonet, wounding him in the leg, but he shot him dead. The enemy then ran away, pursued by Acting-Corporal Clarke, who shot four more and captured a fifth.

Later, he was ordered to the dressing-station, but returned to duty next day.

101465 Private Kerr, John Chipman, 49th Battalion (formerly 66th Battalion, Canadian Infantry).

For most conspicuous bravery. During a bombing attack he was acting as bayonet man, and knowing that bombs were running short, he ran along the parados

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under heavy fire until he was in close contact with the enemy, when he opened fire on them at point-blank range, and inflicted heavy loss.

The enemy, thinking they were surrounded, surrendered. Sixty-two prisoners were taken and 250 yards of enemy trench captured.

Before carrying out this very plucky act one of Private Kerr's fingers had been blown off by a bomb.

Later, with two other men, he escorted back the prisoners under fire, and then returned to report himself for duty before having his wound dressed.

Lieutenant Campbell, Frederick William, 1st Canadian Battalion.

For most conspicuous bravery on 15th June, 1915, during the action at Givenchy.

Lieutenant Campbell took two machine-guns over the parapet, arrived at the German first line with one gun, and maintained his position there, under very heavy rifle, machine-gun and bomb fire, notwithstanding the fact that almost the whole of his detachment had then been killed or wounded.

When our supply of bombs had become exhausted, this officer advanced his gun still further to an exposed position, and, by firing about 1,000 rounds, succeeded in holding back the enemy's counter-attacks.

This very gallant officer was subsequently wounded and had since died.

No. 57113, Sgt. Frederick Hobson, late Canadian Infantry Battalion (20th Battalion).

During a strong enemy counter-attack a Lewis gun in a forward post in a communication trench leading to the enemy lines was buried by a shell, and the crew, with the exception of one man, killed.

Sgt. Hobson, though not a gunner, grasped the great importance of the post, rushed from the trench, dug out the gun, and got it into action against the enemy, who were now advancing down the trench and across the open.

A jam caused the gun to stop firing. Though wounded, he left the gunner to correct the stoppage, rushed forward at the advancing enemy, and, with bayonet and clubbed rifle, single handed, held them back until he himself was killed by a rifle shot. By this time, however, the Lewis gun was again in action and reinforcements shortly afterwards arriving, the enemy were beaten off.

The valour and devotion to duty displayed by this non-commissioned officer gave the gunner the time required to again get the gun into action, and saved a most serious situation.

No. 226353 Pte. Harry Brown, late Canadian Infantry Battalion (D.M.R. Regimental Depot).

For most conspicuous bravery, courage and devotion to duty.

After the capture of a position the enemy massed in force and counter-attacked. The situation became very critical, all wires being cut. It was of the utmost importance to get word to Headquarters. This soldier and one other were given the message, with orders to deliver the same at all costs. The other messenger was killed. Pte. Brown had his arm shattered, but continued on through an intense barrage until he arrived at the close support lines and found an officer.

He was so spent that he fell down the dug-out steps, but retained consciousness long enough to hand over his message, saying "Important message." He then became unconscious and died in the dressing station a few hours later.

His devotion to duty was of the highest possible degree imaginable, and his successful delivery of the message undoubtedly saved the loss of the position for the time and prevented many casualties.

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Lt. Robert Grierson Combe, late Canadian Infantry Battalion (53rd Battalion).

For most conspicuous bravery and example.

He steadied his company under intense fire, and led them through the enemy barrage, reaching the objective with only five men.

With great coolness and courage, Lt. Combe proceeded to bomb the enemy, and inflicted heavy casualties. He collected small groups of men and succeeded in capturing the company objective, together with eighty (80) prisoners.

He repeatedly charged the enemy, driving them before him, and whilst personally leading his bombers, was killed by an enemy sniper.

His conduct inspired all ranks, and it was entirely due to his magnificent courage that the position was carried, secured and held.

No. 144039 Acting Corporal Philip Konowal, Canadian Infantry, 77th Battalion.

For most conspicuous bravery and leadership when in charge of a section in attack. His section had the difficult task of mopping up cellars, craters, and machine-gun emplacements. Under his able direction all resistance was overcome successfully, and heavy casualties inflicted on the enemy. In one cellar he himself bayoneted three enemy and attacked single-handed seven others, in a crater, killing them all.

On reaching the objective, a machine-gun was holding up the right flank, causing many casualties. Corporal Konowal rushed forward and entered the emplacement, killed the crew, and brought the gun back to our lines.

The next day he again attacked single-handed another machine-gun emplacement, killed three of the crew, and destroyed the gun and emplacement with explosives.

This non-commissioned officer alone killed at least sixteen of the enemy, and during the two days' actual fighting carried on continuously his good work until severely wounded.

Captain (Acting Major) Okill Massey Learmouth, M.C., late Canadian Infantry, 12th Battalion.

For most conspicuous bravery and exceptional devotion to duty. During a determined counter-attack on our new positions, this officer, when his company was momentarily surprised, instantly charged and personally disposed of the attackers. Later he carried on a tremendous fight with the advancing enemy. Although under intense barrage fire and mortally wounded, he stood on the parapet of the trench bombed the enemy continuously, and directed the defence in such a manner as to infuse a spirit of utmost resistance into his men.

On several occasions this very brave officer actually caught bombs thrown at him by the enemy and threw them back. When he was unable by reason of his wounds to carry on the fight, he still refused to be carried out of the line, and continued to give instructions and invaluable advice to his junior officers, finally handing over all his duties before he was evacuated from the front line to the hospital where he died.

No. 75361, C.S.M. Robert Hanna, Canadian Infantry, 29th Battalion.

For most conspicuous bravery in attack, when his company met with most severe enemy resistance and all the company officers became casualties. A strong point, heavily protected by wire and held by a machine gun, had beaten off three assaults of the company with heavy casualties. This warrant officer, under heavy machine gun and rifle fire, coolly collected a party of men, and leading them against this strong point, rushed through the wire and personally bayoneted three of the enemy and brained the fourth, capturing the position and silencing the machine gun.

This most courageous action, displayed courage and personal bravery of the highest order at this most critical moment of the attack, was responsible for the capture of a

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most important tactical point, and but for his daring action and determined handling a desperate situation the attack would not have succeeded.

C.S.M. Hanna's outstanding gallantry, personal courage and determined leading his company is deserving of the highest possible reward.

b. 428545 Pte. Michael James O'Rourke, Canadian Infantry (47th Battalion).

For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty during prolonged operations.

For three days and nights Pte. O'Rourke, who is a stretcher bearer, worked incessantly in bringing the wounded into safety, dressing them, and getting them food and water.

During the whole of this period the area in which he worked was subjected to very severe shelling and swept by heavy machine gun and rifle fire. On several occasions he was knocked down and partially buried by enemy shells. Seeing a comrade who had been blinded stumbling around ahead of our trench, in full view of the enemy, who were sniping him, Pte. O'Rourke jumped out of his trench and brought the man back, saving himself heavily sniped while doing so. Again he went forward about 50 yards in front of our barrage under very heavy and accurate fire from enemy machine guns and snipers, and brought in a comrade. On a subsequent occasion he went forward under very heavy enemy fire of every description and brought back a wounded man who had been left behind.

He showed throughout an absolute disregard for his own safety, going wherever there were wounded to succour, and his magnificent courage and devotion in continuing his rescue work, in spite of exhaustion and the incessant heavy enemy fire of every description, inspired all ranks and undoubtedly saved many lives.

Capt. Thain Wendell MacDowell, D.S.O., Canadian Infantry (38th Battalion).

For most conspicuous bravery and indomitable resolution in face of heavy machine gun and shell fire.

By his initiative and courage, this officer, with the assistance of two runners, was enabled, in the face of great difficulties, to capture two machine guns, besides two officers and seventy-five men.

Although wounded in the hand, he continued for five days to hold the position gained, in spite of heavy shell fire, until eventually relieved by his battalion.

By his bravery and prompt action, he undoubtedly succeeded in rounding up a very strong and enemy machine post.

Lt. Frederick Maurice Watson Harvey, Canadian Force (13th Battalion).

For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty.

During an attack by his regiment on a village a party of the enemy ran forward to a wired trench just in front of the village and opened rapid rifle and machine gun fire at a very close range, causing heavy casualties in the leading troop.

At this critical moment, when the enemy showed no intention whatever of retiring and fire was still intense, Lt. Harvey, who was in command of the leading troop, ran forward well ahead of his men and dashed at the trench, still fully manned, jumped the wire, shot the machine gunner and captured the gun.

His most courageous act undoubtedly had a decisive effect on the success of the operation.

No. 53730 Lance-Sergt. Ellis Welwood Sifton, late Canadian Infantry Battalion, 18th.

For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty.

During the attack in enemy trenches, Sgt. Sifton's company was held up by machine gun fire, which inflicted many casualties. Having located the gun, he charged it single-handed, killing all the crew.

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A small enemy party advanced down the trench, but he succeeded in keeping these off till our men gained the position.

In carrying out his gallant act he was killed, but his conspicuous valour undoubtedly saved many lives and contributed largely to the success of the operation.

No. 427586 Pte. William Johnstone Milne, late Canadian Infantry, 46th Battalion.

For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty in attack.

On approaching the first objective Pte. Milne observed an enemy machine gun firing on our advancing troops. Crawling on hands and knees, he succeeded in reaching the gun, killing the crew with bombs and capturing the gun.

On the line reforming, he again located a machine gun in the support line, and, stalking this second gun as he had done the first, he succeeded in putting the crew out of action and capturing the gun.

His wonderful bravery and resource on these two occasions undoubtedly saved the lives of many of his comrades.

Pte. Milne was killed shortly after capturing the second gun.

No. 808887 Pte. John George Pattison, Canadian Infantry (137th Battalion).

For most conspicuous bravery in attack.

When the advance of our troops was held up by an enemy machine gun, which was inflicting severe casualties, Pte. Pattison, with utter disregard of his own safety, sprang forward, and, jumping from shell-hole to shell-hole, reached cover within 30 yards of the enemy gun.

From this point, in face of heavy fire, he hurled bombs, killing and wounding some of the crew, then rushed forward, overcoming and bayonetting the surviving five gunners.

His valour and initiative undoubtedly saved the situation and made possible the further advance to the objective.

Captain (Acting Major) George Randolph Pearkes, M.C., Can. M.R., 5th C.M.R.

For most conspicuous bravery and skilful handling of the troops under his command during the capture and consolidation of considerably more than the objectives allotted to him, in an attack.

Just prior to the advance Major Pearkes was wounded in the left thigh. Regardless of his wound, he continued to lead his men with the utmost gallantry, despite many obstacles.

At a particular stage of the attack his further advance was threatened by a strong point which was an objective of the battalion on his left, but which they had not succeeded in capturing. Quickly appreciating the situation, he captured and held this point, thus enabling his further advance to be successfully pushed forward.

It was entirely due to his determination and fearless personality that he was able to maintain his objective with the small number of men at his command against repeated enemy counter-attacks, both his flanks being unprotected for a considerable depth meanwhile.

His appreciation of the situation throughout and the reports rendered by him were invaluable to his commanding officer in making dispositions of troops to hold the position captured.

He showed throughout a supreme contempt of danger and wonderful powers of control and leading.

Lieutenant (Acting Captain) Christopher Patrick John O'Kelly, M.C., Can. Inf., 144th Battalion.

For most conspicuous bravery in an action in which he led his company with extraordinary skill and determination.

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After the original attack had failed and two companies of his unit had launched a new attack, Captain O'Kelly advanced his command over 1,000 yards under heavy fire without any artillery barrage, took the enemy positions on the crest of the hill by storm, and then personally organized and led a series of attacks against "pill-boxes," his company alone capturing six of them with 100 prisoners and 10 machine guns.

Later on in the afternoon, under the leadership of this gallant officer, his company repelled a strong counter-attack, taking more prisoners, and subsequently during the night captured a hostile raiding party consisting of one officer, 10 men and a machine gun.

The whole of these achievements were chiefly due to the magnificent courage, daring and ability of Captain O'Kelly.

No. 51339 Sergeant George Harry Mullin, M.M., Can. Inf. P.P.C.L.I. Rein.

For most conspicuous bravery in attack, when single-handed he captured a commanding "pill-box" which had withstood the heavy bombardment and was causing heavy casualties to our forces and holding up the attack. He rushed a sniper's post in front, destroyed the garrison with bombs, and, crawling on to the top of the "pill-box," he shot the two machine-gunners with his revolver. Sergeant Mullin then rushed to another entrance and compelled the garrison of ten to surrender.

His gallantry and fearlessness were witnessed by many, and although rapid fire was directed upon him, and his clothes riddled by bullets, he never faltered in his purpose, and not only helped to save the situation but also indirectly saved many lives.

No. 404017 Corporal Colin Barron, Cn. Inf. 3rd Bn.

For conspicuous bravery when in attack his unit was held up by three machine-guns. Corporal Barron opened on them from a flank at point-blank range, rushed the enemy guns single-handed, killed four of the crew, and captured the remainder. He then, with remarkable initiative and skill, turned one of the captured guns on the retiring enemy, causing them severe casualties.

The remarkable dash and determination displayed by this N.C.O. in rushing the guns produced far-reaching results, and enabled the advance to be continued.

No. 838301 Private Thomas William Holmes, C.M.R. (formerly 147th Battalion).

For most conspicuous bravery and resource when the right flank of our attack was held up by heavy machine-gun and rifle fire from a "pill-box" strong point. Heavy casualties were producing a critical situation when Private Holmes, on his own initiative and single-handed, ran forward and threw two bombs, killing and wounding the crews of two machine-guns. He then returned to his comrades, secured another bomb and again rushed forward alone under heavy fire and threw the bomb into the entrance of the "pill-box," causing the nineteen occupants to surrender.

By this act of valour at a very critical moment Private Holmes undoubtedly cleared the way for the advance of our troops and saved the lives of many of his comrades.

No. 437793 Private Cecil John Kinross, Can. Inf. (51st Battalion).

For most conspicuous bravery in action during prolonged and severe operations.

Shortly after the attack was launched, the company to which he belonged came under intense artillery fire, and further advance was held up by a very severe fire from an enemy machine-gun. Private Kinross, making a careful survey of the situation, deliberately divested himself of all his equipment save his rifle and bandolier, and, regardless of his personal safety, advanced alone over the open ground in broad day-

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light, charged the enemy machine gun, killing the crew of six, and seized and destroyed the gun. His superb example and courage instilled the greatest confidence in his company, and enabled a further advance of 300 yards to be made and a highly important position to be established.

Throughout the day he showed marvellous coolness and courage, fighting with the utmost aggressiveness against heavy odds until seriously wounded.

No. 552665 Private James Peter Robertson, late Can. Inf. 13th C.M.R.

For most conspicuous bravery and outstanding devotion to duty in attack. When his platoon was held up by uncut wire and a machine gun, causing many casualties, Private Robertson dashed to an opening on the flank, rushed the machine gun, and after a desperate struggle with the crew, killed four and then turned the gun on the remainder, who, overcome by the fierceness of his onslaught, were running towards their own lines. His gallant work enabled the platoon to advance. He inflicted many more casualties among the enemy, and then, carrying the captured machine-gun, he led his platoon to the final objectives. He there selected an excellent position and got the gun into action, firing on the retreating enemy who by this time were quite demoralized by the fire brought to bear on them.

During the consolidation Private Robertson's most determined use of the machine-gun kept down the fire of the enemy snipers, his courage and his coolness cheered his comrades and inspired them to the finest efforts.

Later, when two of our snipers were badly wounded in front of our trench, he went out and carried one of them in under very severe fire.

He was killed just as he returned with the second man.

Lieutenant Robert Shankland, Canadian Infantry (43rd Battalion).

For most conspicuous bravery and resource in action under critical and adverse conditions.

Having gained a position, he rallied the remnant of his own platoon and men of other companies, disposed them to command the ground in front, and inflicted heavy casualties upon the retreating enemy. Later, he dispersed a counter-attack, thus enabling supporting troops to come up unmolested.

He then personally communicated to battalion headquarters an accurate and valuable report as to the position of the brigade frontage, and after doing so, rejoined his command and carried on until relieved.

His courage and splendid example inspired all ranks, and, coupled with his great gallantry and skill, undoubtedly saved a very critical situation.

Lieutenant Henry Strachan, M.C. Can. Cav. (34th Fort Garry Horse).

For most conspicuous bravery and leadership during operations.

He took command of the squadron of his regiment when the squadron leader, approaching the enemy front line at a gallop, was killed. Lieutenant Strachan led the squadron through the enemy line of machine-gun posts, and then with the surviving men, led the charge on the enemy battery, killing seven of the gunners with his sword. All the gunners having been killed and the battery silenced, he rallied his men and fought his way back right through the enemy's line, bringing all unwounded men safely in, together with 15 prisoners.

The operation, which resulted in the silencing of an enemy battery, the killing of the whole battery personnel and many infantry, and the cutting of three main lines of telephone communications two miles in rear of the enemy's front line, was only rendered possible by the outstanding gallantry and fearless leading of this officer.